

TO: Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators

SUBMITTED BY: Vermont Department of Education Higher Education Liaison on behalf of the Higher Education Committee of the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators

ITEM FOR ACTION: One Year Update: Johnson State College

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators vote to accept the Johnson State College One Year Update on the secondary programs and grant an additional year of conditional approval to its secondary educator preparation programs.

MOTION:

I, _____, move that the VSBPE accept the Johnson State College's One Year Update on the Secondary Programs. I further move that the VSBPE grant one year conditional approval for the following educator preparation programs: English/Language Arts (7-12), Social Studies (7-12) Mathematics (7-12) and Science (7-12).

These approvals will be effective through the completion of the next ROPA Review of Johnson State College's educator preparation programs.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A Program Review Team conducted a full ROPA review of the educator programs at Johnson State College during December 4-7, 2005. After reviewing the Report of the Visiting Team the VSBPE authorized a review team to conduct a one day follow-up review of the education programs on May 22, 2007. The visiting team recommended and the VSBPE granted full approval for all of the graduate, post-baccalaureate and undergraduate programs at this time. In the Two Year Report JSC reported little progress on the concerns surrounding the secondary math, science, social studies and English/LA and the VSBPE considered denying approval of these four programs. The motion was tabled until a meeting could be held with President Murphy and Dean Regan. As a result of that meeting one year conditional approval was given to the above secondary programs. This current report is an update on the secondary programs.

The next ROPA review of all Johnson State College's education programs is scheduled for 2012.

JOHNSON STATE COLLEGE
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

**REPORT TO THE VERMONT HIGHER EDUCATION
COMMITTEE
OF THE VERMONT STANDARDS BOARD**

Brian R. Howe, Chair

June 1, 2009

Background Information

On June 1, 2008 the Education Department of Johnson State College submitted the ROPA-R Two Year Follow-Up Report as a response to the 2006 ROPA accreditation evaluation. After reviewing the Johnson State College report, the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) found eleven JSC teacher licensure programs worthy of full approval. However, the VSBPE originally recommended and moved to deny approval for secondary education licensure programs in English (7-12), Mathematics (7-12), Science (7-12), and Social Studies (7-12) at the undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, and graduate levels.

Johnson State College President, Barbara Murphy, was notified of the VSBPE motion in a letter dated June 27, 2008. President Murphy and Academic Dean Daniel Regan represented JSC at a hearing to discuss the VSBPE motion on July 18th. As a result of that hearing, the JSC administration submitted an Action Plan on June 27th to the VSBPE outlining the JSC action steps to be taken to address the concerns raised about the secondary teacher licensure programs in question. On August 21, 2008, President Murphy was notified that the secondary teacher preparation programs at JSC were granted one year conditional approval. The approval was granted under the stipulation that JSC would submit a report on June 1, 2009 outlining the progress made towards addressing concerns as noted by the VSBPE.

Areas of Concern Cited by the Higher Education Committee of the VSBPE

From two letters addressed to JSC President Barbara Murphy dated June 28 and August 21, 2008 from the Higher Education Committee (HEC), the two major areas of concern identified as in need of improvement for the JSC secondary teacher preparation programs to receive full approval were:

- “The Board is concerned that Johnson is operating these preparation (secondary) programs without a full-time faculty member with expertise in secondary schools.”
- “Secondary candidates in English, mathematics, science, and social studies are not experiencing whole group instruction to 7-12 grade students in a classroom setting prior to student teaching.”

Action Steps Taken by JSC to Address Concerns during the 2008-2009 Academic Year

Full-Time Faculty Member and Other Faculty Resources:

Despite the challenges posed by a difficult budgetary year that limited faculty recruitment overall, the administration at Johnson State College was committed to adding a full-time faculty member to the Education Department. In October of 2008, a national search was launched to secure an educator with secondary education expertise to join the JSC faculty. The search yielded over 30 qualified applicants hailing from states as far away as Utah and Arizona. Six semi-finalists were interviewed via telephone conferences and three finalists were brought to JSC for visits and interviews.

After careful deliberations and consideration, the position was offered to Dr. David McGough, Associate Professor of Education at Nazareth College in Rochester, New York. Professor McGough accepted the position at JSC in March of 2009 and will join the JSC faculty at the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year. In addition to expertise in secondary education, Dr. McGough possesses knowledge and skills in numerous areas that will make him a valuable member of our faculty (see resume in Appendix 1).

While the Education Department at JSC is ecstatic about having a new colleague, our faculty and the entire JSC community were devastated by the tragic and unexpected death of Professor Robert DiGiulio in January, 2009. After securing qualified and able professionals to cover Dr. DiGiulio's teaching responsibilities for the semester, the JSC Administration and the Education Department Chair discussed strategies to attempt to fill the huge void left by Dr. DiGiulio's death. Since no viable candidates for this unanticipated full-time faculty position emerged from the applicant pool that yielded Professor McGough, it was decided to secure part-time faculty members to teach courses for the coming academic year. This arrangement will allow JSC a few months in the fall of 2009 to accurately assess the Education Department's needs and to then launch another faculty search in November of 2009. We fully expect such search to take place. Assuming such a search is possible, the new hire would be on campus for the fall 2010 semester.

In an effort to better serve our students, some faculty members of the Education Department have been given contract extensions or other compensation. As Department Chair, Ken Brighton continues to be granted extended course release time to conduct the duties as department chair. The JSC Licensing Officer, Richard Shanley, has expanded responsibilities concerning student advising, licensure portfolio coordination, student teaching supervision, and facilitation of transcript reviews especially for students seeking secondary licensure.

Clinical Experience for Secondary Pre-service Teachers:

For several years, the JSC Education Department faculty has recognized the need for more practical classroom experience, especially for secondary teacher licensure candidates. In 2007, a new course entitled *Engaged in Creative Teaching and Learning* was added to our licensure programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels. During the semester, students are required to make weekly (one hour minimum) visits to public school classrooms to conduct observations focused on issues such as classroom climate, instructional techniques, classroom management strategies, and individual differences among students. Students also are required to keep a reflective journal in which they analyze their observations through the lens of best practice as emphasized through the course. In addition students are introduced to the licensure portfolio process and actually complete several artifacts that will be included in their final portfolios. Students are required to enroll in this course early in their program so their clinical experience can be used as perspective through which they can examine more theoretical learning presented through their course work. Also, this class helps students understand the format and requirements of the licensure portfolio and provides an opportunity to complete artifacts that will be included in their final product.

Engaged in Creative Teaching and Learning has now been offered for four semesters. Students report that the course does give them early and valuable experience in authentic classrooms and provides fundamental information about the licensure portfolio. Due to the popularity of the course and the requirement to take the course early in one's program, a second section of the course will be offered for the fall 2009 semester.

All secondary teachers licensure candidates (undergraduate, graduate, and EDP) at Johnson State College are required to complete a Secondary Methods I course. This course was revised in 2007 to make it more field - based. The on-campus course is taught by an English teacher at Lamoille Union High School and Part-Time JSC faculty member, Doug Boardman. The course is conducted in Mr. Boardman's classroom at LUHS. During this course students are required to describe and analyze the role of the teacher, examine instructional and management techniques, plan and conduct mini-lessons with their peers as students. Students are also expected to observe high school teachers in action with their students as a clinical component of this course.

While the revised Secondary Methods I course increased the practical and clinical experience of prospective high school teachers, more direct exposure with secondary students for candidates seeking grades 7-12 licensure was needed. A companion course to Secondary Methods I was developed and offered as a pilot course during the spring semester of 2009 (Appendix 2). The courses entitled **Secondary Methods II (EDU 3710/EDU 5270)** were officially approved by the JSC Curriculum and Graduate Committees, as well as the JSC Academic Dean, to be added to our

teacher licensure curriculum in February 2009 (Appendix 3). These courses have been added as required courses for licensure in the 2009-2010 *JSC Undergraduate* and *Graduate Catalogues* (in print). The organization and teaching of **Secondary Methods II** will be a primary responsibility of our secondary education specialist, Dr. David McGough.

By reviewing the course syllabi (Appendix 3A) one can determine the **Secondary Methods II** students will have considerable direct experience working with high school students during this course. Students will be required to develop lesson plans following the protocol learned in Secondary Methods I. To complete the field experience component of **Secondary Methods II**, students will be assigned to a cooperating teacher at Lamoille Union High School who is licensed in the content area in which the candidate is seeking licensure. JSC secondary licensure candidates will work one-on-one with high school students, facilitate small group instruction, and finally implement at least three original lesson plans to an entire class. Students will be asked to describe and reflect on their teaching experience in a reflective journal and make an oral presentation to their peers concerning their clinical experience.

In order for Johnson State College students to have access to secondary students and classrooms, collaboration and cooperation between JSC and local schools is essential. During the fall of 2008, Mr. Doug Boardman, Brian Schaffer, Lamoille Union High School Principal, and Ken Brighton, JSC Education Department Chair, met to discuss plans for implementing **Secondary Methods II** which would have a strong clinical component involving LUHS students and teachers (Appendix 4). On January 6, 2009, Ken Brighton presented the **Secondary Methods II** course proposal to the LUHS Board. After discussion and questions the LUHS Board approved, “LUHS as a secondary professional development site for Johnson State College” (Appendix 5). This agreement will allow JSC secondary licensure candidates to work directly with high school students in the academic discipline in which they are seeking licensure. The classroom teacher also will provide critique and feedback to JSC pre-service teachers. Professor McGough will serve as the JSC instructor in this collaboration and Mr. Boardman will be the liaison between LUHS and JSC. Both LUHS and JSC recognized this partnership to be mutually beneficial.

Professor McGough will be new to the JSC community and the Lamoille Valley community in the fall of 2009. In view of this fact, the Education Department at JSC believed entering into a collaborative agreement with LUHS and laying the groundwork for implementing the **Secondary Methods II** course prior to his arrival would allow the course to be up and running as quickly as possible.

Few would question the value of direct experience in authentic classrooms with today’s adolescents as being a critical component in the professional development of tomorrow’s high school teachers. Through the addition of the *Creative Teaching and Learning* course, the recent

refinement of the Secondary I course, and the creation of the heavily field-based Secondary Methods II led by a full time faculty member with secondary education expertise, high school teacher candidates at JSC will be much better prepared to successfully complete their student teaching assignments.

Involvement of the JSC Liberal Arts Faculty:

In her summary statement of her July 23, 2008 letter to the VSBPE, President Murphy cited the invigorated involvement of our liberal arts faculty in the preparation of pre-service teachers. During the past academic year, several opportunities and initiatives that involved JSC liberal arts faculty members in roles of teacher educators were implemented. Such initiatives are listed below:

- Portion of selected meetings of the Department Chairs' Council were devoted to teacher licensure issues (Appendix 6). When needed, Education Department Chair Ken Brighton was given time to present information and field questions concerning teacher licensure issues that are important for liberal arts faculty to understand when advising pre-service teachers.
- Distribution of *Advising Tips for Liberal Arts Faculty* (Appendix 7). Dr. Brighton developed and distributed an advising packet for liberal arts faculty that contained essential information to be used as an aid to assist faculty when advising licensure candidates in their respective majors.
- Meetings with individual departments concerning specific licensure issues (Appendix 8). In order to inform liberal arts faculty who serve secondary licensure candidates, Dr. Brighton offered to attend faculty meetings to address department specific issues and questions concerning the JSC teacher education program. Liberal arts faculty who participated in these sessions reported that the discussions were very helpful.
- Invitation to liberal arts faculty to attend Licensure Portfolio Training on October 24, 2008 (Appendix 9).
- Invitation to liberal arts faculty to critique and evaluate Licensure Portfolios fall 2008 and spring 2009 (Appendix 10). Professors from the English and Environmental and Health Science Departments have been actively involved in assisting students with licensure portfolio development and review of the final products. Professors from these departments also have served as student teacher supervisors. While not every department is actively involved in the licensure portfolio process, progress has been made in this area.
- Dr. Andrea Perham, Professor of English, served on the Faculty Search Committee that resulted in Dr. David McGough being added to the Education Faculty at JSC.

Conclusion:

During the 2008-2009 academic year, the Education Department and the Johnson State College community invested considerable time and energy to address the concerns noted by the VSBPE about Johnson State College's secondary teacher licensure programs. By securing the employment of a highly qualified secondary specialist as a full-time faculty member in the Education Department, we possess the personnel and expertise to support our secondary students and bolster course offerings. By revising existing courses, developing new learning experiences, and establishing collaborative relationships with a local public high school, secondary licensure candidates now will be exposed to substantial and authentic classroom experiences prior to beginning their student teaching assignments.

Johnson State College has a long and proud tradition of preparing excellent teachers for the public schools of Vermont and our nation. The latest evaluation of the JSC teacher education programs found nearly all worthy of full approval for continued accreditation. With the program modifications and personnel addition cited in this report, the Education Department of Johnson State College will be able to offer high quality preparation programs to all future educators. We hope that the VSBPE shares our assessment and grants full approval for the secondary licensure programs at Johnson State College.